



**DECISION MEMORANDUM**  
**BULLARDS BAR INVASIVE PLANT TREATMENTS PROJECT**  
**YUBA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**  
**FEATHER RIVER RANGER DISTRICT**  
**PLUMAS NATIONAL FOREST**  
**U.S. FOREST SERVICE**

**BACKGROUND**

There are six species of non-native invasive plants (NNIP) within in one (the western) of two quarry sites along Marysville Road in the vicinity of the New Bullards Bar Dam (Figure 1).

These six species are: rush skeletonweed (*Chondrilla juncea*), yellow star-thistle (*Centurea Solstitialis*), Scotch broom (*Cytisus scoparius*), barbed goatgrass (*Aegilops triuncialis*), Italian thistle (*Carduus pycnocephalus*), and Medusa head (*Elymus caput-medusae*). This extensive infestation of NNIP occupies 24 acres within the Bullards Bar Invasive Plant Treatment project area.

**PROPOSED PROJECT NAME AND LOCATION**

The quarry site, along Marysville Road, in the vicinity of New Bullards Bar Dam is located within T. 18 N., R. 7 E., section 26, SE1/4, Mount Diablo Meridian, Yuba County, California.

**PROPOSED PROJECT ACTION AND DESCRIPTION**

We propose to eradicate or control these NNIP using a combination of chemical (herbicides) and manual treatments as described in Table 1. Application methods include select, directed spray, or wicking. Manual treatments include digging, hand pulling, or tarping. No aerial application of herbicides is proposed in this project.

**PURPOSE OF ACTION**

Invasive plants (also known as noxious weeds) can have strong negative effects on wildland values. The location, severity, and management of the Bullards Bar and earlier Pendola fires have created a high risk for invasive plant introduction and spread within the project area watershed. Fire suppression activities, combined with large areas of high burn severity, resulted in considerable ground disturbance and the creation of favorable conditions for the spread of invasive plants. This level of past disturbance, combined with the large number of invasive

species concentrated within the project area, alongside a well-traveled road, where the risk of spread is high, greatly increases the vulnerability of the area and adjacent landscape.

The purpose of the project is to reduce the spread of invasive plant infestations, through the eradication or control of these six species of NNIP within the project area in a timely and cost-effective manner, while protecting human health and critical ecosystem functions.

## NEED FOR ACTION

This action responds to the goals and objectives outlined in the Plumas forest plan, as amended by the Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment, and helps move the project area towards desired conditions described in that plan (USDA Forest Service 2004).

## COLLABORATIVE INVOLVEMENT

This action was listed November, 2017 as a proposed EA on the Plumas National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA), as well as the Feather River Ranger District 10 year Strategic Plan and Forest Program of Work (POW). The project was updated and revised May, 2018 to a CE, incorporating current project development design features, involving public input, using specific resource specialists for review and analysis.

1. Development. November 15, 2017, Yuba County Supervisors, Yuba County Fire Safe Council, and Sierra Forest Legacy among others were notified/informed of the Proposed Action.
2. Input. Collaborative input was accomplished through the following methods:
  - a. Collaborative Meetings.
    - i. Second Wednesday, monthly, Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council meeting, Dobbins-Oregon House, CA
    - ii. June 5, 2018, FRRD Collaborative meeting, Oroville, CA
    - iii. July 23, 2018, Butte County Forest Advisory Committee, Chico, CA

## TRIBAL INVOLVEMENT

This action was listed November, 2017 as a proposed EA on the Plumas National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA), as well as the Feather River Ranger District 10 year Strategic Plan and Forest Program of Work (POW). The project was updated and revised May, 2018 to a CE. The following tribes were invited to participate in the development, review, and implementation of the proposed project.

1. Development. The following tribal agencies were notified/informed of the Proposed Action:
  - a. Estom Yumeka Tribe of Enterprise Rancheria
  - b. Tyme Maidu Tribe of Berry Creek Rancheria



- c. Concow Maidu Tribe of Mooretown Rancheria
  - d. Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
2. Input. Estom Yumeka Tribe of Enterprise Rancheria responded that after a thorough examination of the project and discussions with their cultural specialist and Tribal Historic Preservation Officer that they had determined that the project is within the aboriginal territory of the Tribe. Their records search failed to locate any known cultural sites within the project boundaries. However, they retain the right to consult should any post review discoveries be made.

## PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

This action was listed November, 2017 as a proposed EA on the Plumas National Forest Schedule of Proposed Actions (SOPA), as well as the Feather River Ranger District 10 year Strategic Plan and Forest Program of Work (POW). The project was updated and revised May, 2018 to a CE, incorporating current project development design features, involving public input, using specific resource specialists for review and analysis.

Scoping. Public scoping was accomplished through the following methods:

1. On November 9, 2017, we forwarded a project description and invitation to scoping on request to a member of the public.
2. On November 15, 2017, we received comments expressing concern about our proposal to use glyphosate as a follow-up treatment option for eradicating Scotch broom.

In its issue paper on glyphosate, the US EPA (2016) concluded that, based on the science, glyphosate is “not likely to be carcinogenic to humans” at proposed doses. The California Invasive Plant Council (Cal-IPC 2017) supports the use of glyphosate in invasive plant management as part of an integrated pest management approach. When using glyphosate according to the label, with appropriate personal protective equipment and best practices, glyphosate is low-risk for wildlife, applicators, and the public.

3. On November 17, 2017, we sent a project description and invitation to scoping to 24 representatives of Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, non-government organizations, and members of the public.
4. On November 23, 2017, we published a legal notice of public scoping in the Oroville Mercury-Register.

## ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

Given the project brief, project initiation notice, stakeholder input, public scoping comments and follow up information a comprehensive review and analysis was done of this project by the FRRD IDT. The review and analysis for botany (USDA Forest Service 2018a), hydrology and soils (USDA Forest Service 2018b), and aquatic and terrestrial wildlife (USDA Forest Service 2018c) is incorporated into the project record.

## LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE

As the responsible official, I am responsible for evaluating the effects of the project relative to the definition of significance established by the CEQ Regulations (40 CFR 1508.13). I have found that the Context and intensity of the analyzed resource areas do not meet the threshold nor the criteria for extraordinary circumstances or potential negative or significant effects in the area of potential effect.

## RESULTS OF REVIEW AND ANALYSIS - FINDINGS

I find that there are no extraordinary circumstances that would warrant further analysis and documentation in an EA or EIS. I took into account resource conditions identified in agency procedures that should be considered in determining whether extraordinary circumstances might exist:

- Federally listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species – There are no federally listed species however designated critical habitat for California red-legged frog is in the wildlife analysis area. A biological assessment determined that the project will not affect federally listed species and or their habitat.
- Flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds – There are no flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds in the project area.
- Congressionally designated areas such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas – None are present.
- Inventoried roadless areas or potential wilderness areas – None are present.
- Research natural areas – None are present.
- American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites – None are present.
- Archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas – The project is a screened undertaking (class B) according to the provisions of the Regional PA 2013 (USDA Forest Service 2018d). No standard protection measures are required and the project may be implemented without further review or consultation.

## CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Established by the Chief, this a one of a category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by the agency in implementation of regulations (40 CFR 1508.4).

Analysis reports for hydrology and soils (USDA Forest Service 2018b) and wildlife and aquatics (USDA Forest Service 2018c) address why cumulative effects would have no significance for this project.



## DECISION

I have decided to approve/disapprove the project and proposed action with the requirements, design features, best management practices, or mitigation measures listed in this Decision Memorandum and in the appendices.

Design criteria to protect human health, water quality, and natural resources will be incorporated into the proposed action. Herbicides will be applied in accordance with:

1. Product label directions;
2. California Department of Pesticide Regulation requirements;
3. Forest Service best management practices for water quality (USDA Forest Service 2011), Forest Service direction (FSM 2900, 2150 and 2200), and Handbook (FSH 2109.14); and
4. This project will include a Pesticide Use Spill Plan.

Prior to any herbicide use, a Pesticide Use Proposal (PUP) (FS-2100-2) and safety plan (FS-6700-7) will be completed by the project leader and approved by the Responsible Official. These documents will be included in the project record.

Specific design features, best management practices, and mitigation measures are summarized in Appendix A. The Soil and Water Quality Monitoring Plan is Appendix B.

A June 20, 2014, Presidential Memorandum recommends additional best management practices to promote the health of honey bees and other pollinators. To address this recommendation, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of the Interior have developed best management practices to protect pollinators when implementing management activities, including pesticide treatments (USDA and USDI 2015). Although not yet required, these best management practices will be followed and are consistent with the project design features for this project.

This action is categorically excluded from documentation in an environmental impact statement (EIS) or an environmental assessment (EA). The applicable category of actions is identified in agency procedures as 36 CFR 220.6(d)(3), *repair and maintenance of administrative sites*. This category of action(s) is applicable because the agency regularly and routinely implements an integrated pest management approach to non-native invasive plants. The Forest Service contracts with Syracuse Environmental Research Associates (SERA) to develop human health risk assessments. SERA human and ecological risk assessments for this project are summarized in the hydrology and soils report (USDA Forest Service 2018b). The potential for detrimental effects to water and soils from proposed herbicide treatments are negligible. The herbicides proposed for use in this project have relatively short half-lives and degrade in soils quickly. Past monitoring has shown little to no evidence of any measureable or lasting contamination and herbicides have not been detected moving into water bodies.

## FINDINGS REQUIRED BY OTHER LAWS AND REGULATIONS

This decision is consistent with the Plumas National Forest Land Management Plan as amended by the 2004 Sierra Nevada Forests Plan Amendment (SNFPA) supplemental EIS and ROD.

This project meets the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

This project meets the requirements of the Clean Water Act of 1972.

### ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW (APPEAL) OPPORTUNITIES

This Decision does not provide for any “appeal” or “objection” opportunities. All public and stakeholder input was received and considered during the FRRD collaborative process for this project. Once this Decision is signed the project or proposed action may be implemented immediately, notwithstanding any other law or regulation from another agency that would preclude its immediate implementation.

### IMPLEMENTATION DATE AND REQUIREMENTS

This action may be implemented immediately following the delivery and discussion of the Regulatory Requirements, Best Management Practices (BMPs), Design Features, and/or Mitigation Measures required by this Decision Memorandum with those responsible for implementation. A notice of receipt or acknowledgement must be received by the Responsible Official or their designee and maintained with this Decision Memorandum prior to implementation and maintained until the project is complete and reviewed by District officials.

### CONTACT

For additional information concerning this decision, contact: Lawrence Janeway, District Botanist, [ljaneway@fs.fed.us](mailto:ljaneway@fs.fed.us).

  
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David B. Brillenz  
District Ranger  
Feather River Ranger District  
Plumas National Forest

7/31/2018

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Date



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